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UNCLAS BRATISLAVA 000562

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR EUR, D, P, AND PA

FROM THE AMBASSADOR

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: HIGH-LEVEL USG PARTICIPATION IN SLOVAK NATIONAL UPRISING 60TH ANNIVERSARY

1. PRIME MINISTER DZURINDA HAS INVITED PRESIDENT BUSH OR HIS REPRESENTATIVE TO ATTEND THE COMMEMORATION OF THE 60TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SLOVAK NATIONAL UPRISING IN BANSKA BYSTRICA, SLOVAKIA (LETTER ALREADY DELIVERED IN WASHINGTON BY THE SLOVAK EMBASSY). AUGUST 29, 2004 MARKS THE 60TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SLOVAK NATIONAL UPRISING, WHEN SLOVAKS COMMEMORATE THEIR PROUD RESISTANCE TO NAZI AND FASCIST FORCES RULING THE COUNTRY DURING WORLD WAR II. IT ALSO MARKS AN IMPORTANT MOMENT IN U.S.-SLOVAK RELATIONS, AS U.S. MILITARY FORCES AND MEMBERS OF THE OFFICE OF STRATEGIC SERVICES SUPPORTED THE UPRISING BY AIRLIFTING SUPPLIES TO THE PARTISANS. THERE ARE MANY TOUCHING STORIES OF U.S. PILOTS WHO WERE SHOT DOWN BY NAZI FORCES AND SAVED BY SLOVAK CITIZENS.

2. SEVERAL VETERANS ARE PLANNING TO RETURN TO SLOVAKIA TO MARK THE OCCASION, AND THE EMBASSY IS PLANNING A SERIES OF EVENTS TO HIGHLIGHT THE FRIENDSHIP BETWEEN SLOVAK AND AMERICAN CITIZENS, INCLUDING THE TRANSLATION INTO SLOVAK OF A BOOK DESCRIBING U.S. INVOLVEMENT IN THE UPRISING. EMBASSY ACTIVITIES WILL HELP REKINDLE FRIENDSHIPS AMONG VETERANS AND SLOVAK VILLAGERS, AND ENSURE THAT THE U.S. CONTRIBUTION IS FOREVER NOTED AT THE MUSEUM OF THE SLOVAK NATIONAL UPRISING.

3. I STRONGLY ENCOURAGE HIGH-LEVEL REPRESENTATION AT THIS EVENT. A HIGH-LEVEL VISITOR WILL REINFORCE THE CONTINUING TIES AND FRIENDSHIP BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND SLOVAKIA IN A NEW AGE, WHEN WE ARE NATO ALLIES AND AGAIN WORKING SIDE BY SIDE TO BRING FREEDOM TO PEOPLE IN PLACES SUCH AS IRAQ AND AFGHANISTAN. MADELEINE ALBRIGHT, THEN AMBASSADOR TO THE UNITED NATIONS, WAS THE VIP GUEST DURING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION IN 1994, AND HER PARTICIPATION WAS GREATLY APPRECIATED (AND IS STILL RECALLED) BY THE SLOVAK GOVERNMENT AND CITIZENS.

WEISER

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